

§ 1955.12

29 CFR Ch. XVII (7–1–06 Edition)

thereof, should be withdrawn shall be referred to the administrative law judge.

§ 1955.12 Administrative law judge; powers and duties.

(a) The administrative law judge appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3105 and designated by the Chief Administrative Law Judge to preside over a proceeding shall have all powers necessary and appropriate to conduct a fair, full, and impartial proceeding, including the following:

(1) To administer oaths and affirmations;

(2) To rule upon offers of proof and receive relevant evidence;

(3) To provide for discovery, including the issuance of subpoenas authorized by section 8(b) of the Act and 5 U.S.C. 555(d) and 556(c)(2), and to determine the scope and time limits of the discovery;

(4) To regulate the course of the proceeding and the conduct of the parties and their counsel;

(5) To consider and rule upon procedural requests, e.g. motions for extension of time;

(6) To hold preliminary conferences for the settlement or simplification of issues;

(7) To take official notice of material facts not appearing in the evidence in the record in accordance with § 1955.40(c);

(8) To render an initial decision;

(9) To examine and cross-examine witnesses;

(10) To take any other appropriate action authorized by the Act, the implementing regulations, or the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 554–557 (hereinafter called the APA).

(b) On any procedural question not otherwise regulated by this part, the Act, or the APA, the administrative law judge shall be guided to the extent practicable by the pertinent provisions of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

§ 1955.13 Disqualification.

(a) If an administrative law judge deems himself disqualified to preside over a particular proceeding, he shall withdraw by notice on the record directed to the Chief Administrative Law Judge. Any party who deems an admin-

istrative law judge, for any reason, to be disqualified to preside, or to continue to preside, over a particular proceeding may file a motion to disqualify and remove the administrative law judge, provided the motion is filed prior to the time the administrative law judge files his decision. Such motion must be supported by affidavits setting forth the alleged ground for disqualification. The Chief Administrative Law Judge shall rule upon the motion.

(b) Contumacious conduct at any proceeding before the administrative law judge shall be ground for summary exclusion from the proceeding. If a witness or party refuses to answer a question after being so directed, or refuses to obey an order to provide or permit discovery, the administrative law judge may make such orders with regard to the refusal as are just and proper, including the striking of all testimony previously given by such witness on related matters.

§ 1955.14 Ex parte communications.

(a) Except to the extent required for the disposition of *ex parte* matters, the administrative law judge shall not consult any interested person or party or their representative on any fact in issue or on the merits of any matter before him except upon notice and opportunity for all parties to participate.

(b)(1) Written or oral communications from interested persons outside the Department of Labor involving any substantive or procedural issues in a proceeding directed to the administrative law judge, the Secretary of Labor, the Assistant Secretary, the Associate Assistant Secretary for Regional Programs, the Solicitor of Labor, or the Associate Solicitor for Occupational Safety and Health, or their staffs shall be deemed *ex parte* communications and are not to be considered part of any record or the basis for any official decision, unless the communication is made by motion to the administrative law judge and served upon all the parties.

(2) To facilitate implementation of this requirement, the above-mentioned